

Policy Title: Criteria For Admission of Children and
Adolescents

Scope: East Mississippi State Hospital and Mississippi State Hospital shall follow the established criteria for admission when considering an adolescent for admission.

Policy: It shall be the policy of the Department of Mental Health to follow the regulations established pursuant to Section 41-21-63 et seq., 43-21-315, 43-21-611, 41-31-1 et. seq., and other relevant statutes when considering an adolescent for admission.

Procedure: I. CATCHMENT

All adolescents between the ages of twelve (12) and eighteen (18), shall be admitted for psychiatric treatment to East Mississippi State Hospital or Mississippi State Hospital according to the regional catchment areas used for adults. All adolescents shall be admitted for treatment for chemical dependency at East Mississippi State Hospital. All children between the ages of four and eleven years 11 months shall be admitted to Mississippi State Hospital.

II. APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION

A. A mentally ill person who is under the age of fourteen (14) years may be admitted upon the application of his/her parent or legal guardian if the following has occurred:

1. An investigation by the director which carefully probes the person's social, psychological, and developmental background; and
2. A determination by the director

that the person will benefit from care and treatment of his disorder at the facility and that services and facilities are available. The reasons for the determination shall be in writing.

- B. A mentally ill person who is fourteen (14) years of age or older but less than eighteen (18) years of age may be admitted to a treatment facility pursuant to an order of the Chancery Court or Youth Court in the same manner as an adult may be involuntarily committed.
- C. A person between the ages of 12 and 18 may be admitted for treatment of chemical dependency by application of his/her parent or legal guardian or by order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

II. PLACEMENT

Priority shall be given to court orders. Admissions are limited by the official bed capacity. Individuals eligible for admission for whom space is not available shall be placed on the waiting list.

Involuntary admissions for psychiatric treatment are governed by statutory guidelines set out in Section 41-21-61 et seq. of the Mississippi Code. These limit involuntary admissions to mentally ill persons suffering from "a substantial psychiatric disorder" and who pose a substantial likelihood of physical harm to themselves or others. This statutory authorization, therefore, does not permit admission of individuals manifesting delinquent or dangerous behavior who do not also have a substantial psychiatric disorder.

Similarly, individuals who may need

mental treatment may not be involuntarily admitted if they do not pose a substantial likelihood of physical harm. Consistent with this statutory framework, psychiatric services are available only for individuals suffering from a substantial psychiatric disorder who pose a serious threat of physical harm.